



**La Plata County, Colorado/  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Cooperative Agreement  
For Gold King Mine Spill Response/Recovery**

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**Project Period: August 6, 2015 - August 5, 2025**

This project supports La Plata County's response and recovery activities in relation to the Gold King Mine Spill and allows for La Plata County's meaningful and substantial involvement in the Environmental Protection Agency's response and cleanup activities.

CFDA: 66.802

Hazardous Substance Response Fund

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980

Project Period: 10 years

## **I. INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT OVERVIEW**

Located in southwest Colorado, La Plata County is a rural county with a population of over 50,000 residents who reside in the three towns of Durango, Bayfield and Ignacio and in unincorporated areas. The County depends on energy development, agriculture and tourism to sustain its economy. Visitors are drawn to the region for its beauty and the extensive outdoor activities it has to offer, including hiking, biking, skiing, fly fishing, kayaking and rafting. One of the region's premier attractions is the beautiful Animas River, which runs from its headwaters above Silverton, Colorado, through Durango and into New Mexico, where it eventually meets the San Juan River. The Animas River is the lifeblood of our community. The river not only draws recreational users, but supplies water to farmers and ranchers for crops and livestock, and supplies domestic drinking water to the City of Durango and over one thousand residents whose private wells are located in the alluvium of the river.

On August 5, 2015, an EPA contractor working to remediate acid mine waste in the Gold King Mine above Silverton caused the release of 3 million gallons of toxic mine waste into the Animas River. Heavy metals detected in the spill include arsenic, cadmium, lead, iron, copper, zinc and selenium. This sludge then slowly made its path down the Animas, turning the river orange and depositing heavy, insoluble metals on the river bed along its way. The heavy-metal laden waste polluted the river through the entire length of La Plata County. It passed through Southern Ute lands, then continued into New Mexico where it dumped into the San Juan River.

The effects of the Gold King Mine spill on the County's local economy cannot be overstated. Agricultural users had to shut down their irrigation and stock watering systems, rafting companies and other recreational users were banned from the river, riparian landowners were advised to have their water tested before using it for cooking, drinking, or bathing, and photos of the bright orange river were broadcast worldwide, negatively impacting tourism, likely for years to come. Effects of the spill on groundwater wells, fish and other wildlife are not yet known, as it may be years before the results of the heavy metal contamination are seen. Similarly, effects to human health are not yet quantified.

This project will reimburse the costs of the County's initial response to the spill, as well as the County's ongoing remediation and recovery efforts. As such, this Cooperative Agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency will allow the County to have meaningful and substantial involvement in the EPA's remediation efforts. As part of this agreement, the County will endeavor to complete the work plan outlined in Section III, below.

## **II. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Pre-Award Costs:**

The County has included in its cooperative agreement budget pre-award costs to reimburse its response costs from the date we were notified of the blowout (August 6, 2015) through the date this agreement is signed. This includes the costs of our short term response, outlined below, and the long-term response activities that we have completed to date.

### **Short Term Response:**

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In the days and weeks immediately following the Gold King Mine Spill, the County acted as the main hub for the response activities of the County, the EPA, the City of Durango, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe and the San Juan Basin Health Department. As such the County provided:

- Space for the Incident Command Center
- Telephones, Internet access and supplies for the Incident Command Center
- County employees to staff the Incident Command Center
- County employees to staff the Call Center
- County employees to organize and staff a Recovery Center
- Meals for responding County and EPA employees, and other responders
- Lodging for EPA employees and other responders
- An emergency order shutting down the river, then developed criteria to lift that order
- Law enforcement to post river closure notices and police the banks to prevent river use
- Distribution of bottled water to City of Durango and County residents
- Public information including staffing a hotline and holding community meetings

The County further contracted with a water engineering firm to assist the EPA in identifying private wells in the alluvium, provide access to historical and existing data sets, and conduct sampling. The engineers sampled and analyzed the water column, private and commercial wells, soil sediments, algae, fish tissue and benthic organisms. County-employed environmental specialists also assisted in these efforts.

#### **Long Term Response/Recovery:**

The La Plata County Board of County Commissioners has established the following goals for its long-term response to the Gold King Mine Spill:

- Ensure that La Plata County taxpayers are “made whole” in terms of County expenditures related to the Gold King Mine Spill.
- Advocate for individuals and businesses financially or otherwise impacted by the spill.
- Have meaningful and substantial involvement in the development of short, medium, and long-term plans to transition the incident from response to recovery.
- Implement a more robust monitoring system to provide early warnings to La Plata County of similar incidents.
- Maintain public trust and confidence by employing a “trust but verify” approach with the EPA's ongoing monitoring and reporting efforts.
- Work collaboratively with other local governments (including the town of Silverton, San Juan County and the City of Durango) and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe to become knowledgeable and to evaluate long-term options to address acid mine drainage from San Juan County, CO mines, including the possibility of Superfund designation.
- Advocate at the state and federal level to implement the course of action determined to be most appropriate to address the long-standing problem of acid mine drainage.
- Ensure accountability to the citizens of La Plata County by agencies involved in fulfilling the agreed-upon course of action.

In order to achieve these goals, the County will advertise for and hire a Project and Grant Administrator, who will coordinate the County's response and recovery activities as outlined in the below work plan.

### III. WORK PLAN

#### **Task 1: Review and Comment on the EPA's Response Plans and Continue Monitoring Effects of Spill**

La Plata County has contracted with Wright Water Engineers, Inc. (WWE) to provide consulting and technical services to the County. WWE will provide independent third party analysis of the physical, chemical, and biological impacts to the Animas River and associated environs located within and upstream of La Plata County, Colorado in the wake of the Gold King Mine spill. Specific areas of interest include impacts to surface water, sediments, soils, irrigated agriculture, domestic and municipal uses, industrial and commercial uses including recreation, aquatic including benthic organisms, and wildlife uses. WWE has a wide array of adjunct scientists, engineers, technicians and geologists that will be employed on this project.

WWE anticipates independent consulting services in four broad areas: 1) Review and comment on the Sampling Plan (Watershed and Quality Assurance Project Plans), 2) Sampling and split sampling with EPA and contractors, 3) Review, interpretation, reporting and presentations on sampling results, findings and recommendations, and 4) Review and comment on short, intermediate, and long term remediation and treatment plans. The costs of some of these activities have already been covered under the County's purchase order with CDPHE. The ~~County~~ <sup>County</sup> has unreimbursed costs in our cooperative agreement budget, as well as costs going forward.

- 1) **Review and comment on Watershed Plan:** This will occur both in its inception and for needed changes as the sampling program develops under an adaptive management strategy. Includes review and comments on draft plans and amendments, meetings and coordination with EPA, contractors and stakeholders, review of water, soil, and aquatic wildlife and benthic organisms and associated study areas, sampling locations, frequency, duration, methodology, parameters, data quality objectives, data archiving, access and management, and other areas that may arise.
- 2) **Third party sample collection based on the adopted Watershed Plan:** This will range from independent sampling to splitting samples with EPA for independent lab testing of samples taken within La Plata County and upstream contributing areas. Includes at a minimum 10 percent of the samples collected to have independent third party collection and analysis, includes 30 percent of samples collected to include sample splits and third party lab analysis. Includes sampling for groundwater, surface water, sediment, soils, and benthic organisms. In order to protect the health and safety of its residents and visitors, the County also sampled for additional analytes beyond those sampled for by the EPA.
- 3) **Review, interpretation, reporting and presentations on sample results and documented findings by EPA, contractors and others:** Includes review and interpretation of monitoring data results including data collected and analyzed by independent third parties, EPA and contractors, and other State, Tribal and local organizations and stakeholders. Coordination with partners including adjunct scientists, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Colorado

Geological Survey, Southern Ute Indian Tribe, and Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. Review of draft and final reports prepared by EPA, associated contractors and others. Includes coordination, meetings, preparation of memos and reports, and presentations to La Plata County and associated stakeholders on findings.

- 4) **Review and comment on short, intermediate and long term remediation and treatment plans:** This will include current mine discharge treatment methodologies and plans for long term treatment of mine discharge including passive and active acid mine drainage treatment and bulk-heading of mine portals, adits and drifts in the Cement Creek Drainage. Independent review of spill and emergency response plans. Based on findings of the monitoring program, provide an independent review of proposed remediation plans of surface water, sediments, soils, groundwater (including domestic and public groundwater supplies located in unincorporated La Plata County), benthic organisms and aquatic wildlife species.

To further the above objectives, the County and WWE have convened a technical review subcommittee to review and comment on watershed, well monitoring and real time monitoring stations data. The committee includes representatives from La Plata County Emergency Management, the City of Durango, San Juan Basin Health Department, CDPHE, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, Mountain Studies Institute, the Animas Watershed Partnership, Animas River Stakeholders and Colorado Parks and Wildlife, among others.

Activities	Deliverables	Responsibility	Completed By
Contract with Consultant	Contractor Scope of Work on file	La Plata County	Complete
Review and comment on the Watershed Plan	Written comments submitted to LPC and USEPA for review	Consultant	Ongoing
Conduct independent sampling and split sampling with USEPA	Lab results on file	La Plata County/Consultant	Ongoing
Review, interpret and report on sample results	Memos, reports, presentation materials on file	Consultant	Ongoing
Review and comment on short-term, intermediate and long-term remediation plans	Written comments submitted to LPC and USEPA for review	Consultant	Ongoing

## **Task 2: Develop and Implement a Real-Time River Monitoring System**

Toxic mine waste in the Gold King Mine poses an ongoing hazard to downstream water users, as another blowout of the mine is a real possibility for which La Plata County must be prepared. The County's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) currently lacks the ability to actively monitor conditions at the mine and in the river below the mine. For this reason, the County OEM has put together a plan for an early warning system that will give the County and river water users notice of any mine-related event that will degrade river water quality. The Animas River Alert System is necessary to protect the health and safety of Animas River stakeholders by monitoring selected river and climate characteristics as indicators of safe or hazardous conditions for common river uses. The data the system collects will be used to provide customized automated alerts through existing systems, prompt sampling of surface water and for research on hydrology, sediment origin and several ecological health factors.

The project consists of the purchase, placement and operation of six river gauges along the Animas River and several of its tributaries from the North end of Durango through the Animas Valley, as well as two gauges in the town of Silverton. Currently proposed gauge locations on the Animas River include the City of Durango's former pumping station at 29<sup>th</sup> St., Trimble Lane, Baker's Bridge and the USGS gauging station south of Silverton; with additional locations on tributaries to the Animas including Lightner Creek, Junction Creek, Hermosa Creek, and Cement Creek.

The Animas River Alert System will monitor surface water conditions for water flowing into and through La Plata County and serve as an early warning system to alert water users to potentially hazardous or detrimental river conditions. The system will also measure the flow and conditions of water coming into the Animas from tributaries between Silverton and Durango so that the County can estimate river water dilution. This data will allow La Plata County to identify potentially hazardous river conditions well ahead of health, environmental, mechanical or perceived impacts. Ditch companies can close their gates, water users can cut off intake, and law enforcement can close the river to human recreation before the contaminated water arrives in the County.

Each of the eight monitoring stations will be controlled by a programmable data logger with near real time data collection and distribution. The standard configuration enables measurement of water gauge height and turbidity. Electro-Conductivity, pH and rainfall measurement are included in the Animas River and Cement Creek gauges. The monitoring station co-located at the USGS gauge below Silverton on the Animas will have an auto sampler that can collect up to 24 one-liter samples at a time. Connectivity for telemetry will be via the AT&T cellular network. The system uses event-based conditions to initiate notifications and sampling.

Data collected by the system will be automatically downloaded to a server multiple times an hour. The raw data will run through a number of Data Transformation Services where it will be ingested into relevant databases and made accessible to multiple stakeholders including the EPA, USGS, NOAA, LPC, Durango, Silverton, research partners, educators and of course the public. A software application will be designed through the National Center for Atmospheric Research and/or the National Severe Storm Labs to collect and analyze the data. Customized notifications will be structured for La Plata County and partner agencies based on triggers defined by the agencies. Triggers could be based on a single sensor exceedance or combinations of parameters. Automated notifications could include text, email or launching of pre-configured call lists and messaging through the County's CodeRed reverse-911 system.

This project addresses several gaps in La Plata County's ability to protect public safety, health

and well-being in our communities:

- Monitoring for changes in river chemistry to the Animas River from mine or mill discharge in San Juan County is currently not adequate to protect downstream populations.
- River flows and tributary flow contributions are largely unknown between the USGS river gauge 20 miles north of Durango at Tall Timber to the USGS river gauge near 9<sup>th</sup> St., just North of Durango's drinking water intake.
- There are no stream gauges on tributaries to the Animas between Silverton and the New Mexico state line aside from the Florida River.
- Over the winter of 2015-2016, it is likely that there will not be on-site staffing sufficient to monitor accidental or excessive discharge from Gold King Mine site. Without the alert system, the first warning of an adverse event would likely be the intake of contaminated water at Durango's public water supply.
- There is no prediction or monitoring of sediment origin, intensity, transport or deposition to protect agricultural and drinking water sources from the metals-laden formations of the Animas headwaters in San Juan County, CO.

The project will remain in place for the entire ten year term of the grant. The proposed equipment is considered semi-permanent (no concrete pad, no permanent anchor) and modular. Any station may be easily converted to a permanent station with some simple upgrades. Equipment will include solar powered monitoring stations based primarily on Campbell Scientific equipment. Base units consist of a mounting frame, solar power, battery, grounding equipment, data logger, cellular modem and equipment enclosure. Sensor packages will be tailored to each location and may include: radar stream gauge, laser precipitation sensor, pH sensor, Electro-Conductivity sensor, turbidity monitor and auto sampler.

The costs of ongoing operation and maintenance are based on the assumption that all sites will have easy drive-up access, have cellular coverage and will be located on government property (Federal, State, County or City). The County's OEM will work with our partner agencies, both government and private, to find where to house the data collected, which should come at minimal cost. Potential partners include San Juan County Colorado, the City of Durango, the Town of Silverton, Fort Lewis College Environmental Studies Department, Mountain Studies Institute, EPA, NOAA, USGS, Colorado Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Colorado Division of Water Resources, Colorado Water Conservation Board, Southwest Water Conservation Board, San Juan Basin Health, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Animas River Stakeholders Group, National Center for Atmospheric Research.

Both Mountain Studies Institute and Fort Lewis College have expressed interest in helping with the calibration and maintenance of the units. We estimate that this will cost \$1000 per unit per year. Each gauge will be placed at bridges or other contained flow areas to facilitate initial setup and ongoing flow estimations.

There will be an additional cost for maintenance and operation of the auto sampler at the USGS site below Silverton. Maintenance costs will be dependent on how often the unit is triggered and severity of weather. Maintaining the unit through the winter will require heat to keep the unit from



freezing (the USGS site has electrical power). OEM will work with our partners to assign criteria based on collected data for flow, pH, EC and turbidity to determine when to activate the auto sampler. This criteria would also activate a system for manual sampling at other locations on the Animas such as Baker's Bridge.

Activities	Deliverables	Responsibility	Completed By
Purchase equipment for 8 river gauges	Invoices, photos of equipment photos and LPC property tags submitted to USEPA	La Plata County OEM	Month 1
Purchase streamflow software/arrange for programming	Invoice submitted to USEPA	La Plata County OEM	Month 1
Install 8 monitoring stations along Animas River	Photos of stations submitted to USEPA	La Plata County OEM	Month 2
Program alert system software application	La Plata County certifies in writing to USEPA that programming is complete	Nat'l Center for Atmospheric Research	Month 2
Publish data collected from gauges	Data published to Internet - link sent to USEPA	La Plata County OEM	Ongoing
Calibrate and maintain gauges	Annual maintenance schedule submitted to USEPA	Mountain Studies Institute/Fort Lewis College	Ongoing

### Task 3: Develop Future Gold King Mine-Related Event Response Plan

Because there exists the real possibility of another mine blowout or a weather-related blowout of the treatment system at the mouth of the mine, the County has included in our agreement's budget the cost of responding to another Gold King Mine-related event of either man-made or natural causes. We have used the costs incurred during the current response to estimate the cost

of responding to another event. Those costs include staffing and supplying a “pop-up” Incident Command Center with personnel, equipment, and office supplies. Also included are the costs of providing responders with food and lodging, law enforcement response to close the river, and the cost of hiring a consultant to test for the effects of mine waste on surface water, wells, sediment, fish tissue and benthic organisms.

Activities	Deliverables	Responsibility	Completed By
Assess La Plata County's 2015 GKM related response activities and estimate cost of a future response	Costs included in this cooperative agreement's budget	La Plata County	Complete

#### Task 4: Investigate the Feasibility of Superfund Designation

The EPA has proposed giving Superfund designation to Gold King and other mines that spill toxic waste into the Animas River. Adding the area to the National Priorities List would make it eligible for significant study and cleanup resources under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (Superfund). Superfund is the federal program that investigates and cleans up the country's most complex, uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites to protect public health and the environment. San Juan County, Colorado and the Town of Silverton have resisted the designation, citing concerns about the negative impacts that being labeled a Superfund site would have on tourism and property values.

However, the Gold King Mine event has made it abundantly clear that La Plata County's neighbors to the north are not the only community that has an interest in cleaning up the abandoned mines around Silverton. There is a real possibility not only of another Gold King Mine-related spill event, but also spills from the many other mines in the San Juan Mountains. Superfund designation would release funds and other EPA resources to mitigate the risks not only to Silverton, but to the many other downstream communities. The benefits of Superfund designation are both direct and indirect, and include reduction of threats to human health and ecological systems in the vicinity of the mines, improvement of economic conditions and quality of life in Silverton and downstream communities, prevention of future releases of toxic mine waste, and advances in science and technology.

To investigate whether Superfund designation is warranted, La Plata County's Administrators and Board of County Commissioners plan to tour comparable nearby Superfund sites to discuss those communities' experience with the benefits and drawbacks of Superfund designation. Other entities affected by the Gold King Mine blowout, including San Juan County, the Town of Silverton and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, have expressed interest in joining the tour. La Plata County will also discuss implementation of the Superfund program with the EPA and the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, and will consider retaining an independent consultant to perform consensus building activities with communities located along the Animas River. The costs associated with these activities are included in the County's cooperative agreement budget.

Activities	Deliverables	Responsibility	Completed By
Schedule tour of nearby Superfund sites	Written tour schedule submitted to USEPA	La Plata County	Complete

Visit Superfund sites in Colorado	Written results of conversations with site representatives reported to USEPA	La Plata County	30 days
Contract with independent consultant to conduct consensus building	Contract submitted to USEPA	La Plata County	Month 3
Hold community meetings in Silverton, Durango, and other affected communities re: benefits and drawbacks of Superfund designation	Meeting attendance sign-in sheets and meeting minutes on file	La Plata County/Consultant	Ongoing/Year 1
Develop written report on results of Superfund community meetings	Written report submitted to USEPA	La Plata County/Consultant	End of Year 1

#### Task 5: Community Outreach and Data Dissemination

La Plata County may contract with an environmental education entity for community outreach/information dissemination services to educate the local community about the impacts of the spill on water quality, human health and the environment. The contractor will combine data from WWE, the EPA, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, CDPHE, the U.S. Geological Service, Mountain Studies Institute and other sources, and present that data to the public using understandable visual graphs and diagrams. They will integrate the event data with historical data to show context over time, and prepare materials to clearly communicate the science to decision makers and the public.

The contractor will further develop tailored science-based communication tools directed at specific river users such as irrigators, well owners and water-based businesses, in order to help those users understand how they have been affected by the spill and their long-term risks (real or perceived). Using visuals, they will present post- and pre-spill data and explain spill impacts to the general public in ways that a lay person can understand. They will present this information to interested groups in person, via published educational materials, and digitally via a website.

Activities	Deliverables	Responsibility	Completed By
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Contract with Consultant	Contractor Scope of Work	La Plata County	Month 2
Combine data from various sources re: spill impacts	Combined data incorporated into report to USEPA	Consultant	Month 4
Develop written materials communicating spill impact data	Written materials on file	Consultant	Year 1
Disseminate information on spill impact to river users via various methods (written materials, website, email, social media, etc.)	Dissemination methods documented and on file	Consultant	Ongoing/Year 1 & 2
Hold community meetings with river user groups to communicate spill impact data	Meeting attendance sign-in sheets and meeting minutes on file	Consultant	Ongoing/Year 1 & 2

### Task 6: Public Education Campaign

La Plata County's public image and reputation as a desirable place to live, work and visit were negatively impacted by the Gold King Mine spill. News of the spill and pictures of the orange Animas River spread far and wide - not only nationally, but worldwide. The Durango Area Tourism Office (DATO) conducted a media analysis for the period August 5 through August 24 and determined that 19 million negative impressions were made. The 164 articles about the incident had a value of more than \$3.4 million dollars' worth of advertising, but it was the wrong kind of advertising.

The month of August is the height of visitor and recreation-generated activity in our area. Our summer season was cut short, first by the visual impacts of the Gold King spill, and then by questions about the impact of the spill on the river and our community. Long term impacts will be felt beginning next year due to lingering public perceptions of a polluted orange river, dead fish, and closed businesses. Locally and nationally, much of the public is misinformed about the effects of the spill and the status of river use. The two visitor centers operated by DATO continue to get phone calls and e-mails from potential visitors that believe the mine spill has permanently closed the river to all recreational activity, that the municipal water is unsafe to drink, and the air unsafe to breathe. Calls have come in to our community from around the country asking questions like: *Are all the fish dead? Will the fumes harm my family if we walk by the river? Is the river ever going to recover?*

It's obvious that our community's image and reputation as a natural, scenic, family-friendly outdoor mecca has been badly damaged as a result of this spill. While we do not yet know what the long-term impact of the publicity generated by the Gold King spill will be, we anticipate that there could be lingering negative images, public health and safety concerns and declines in future visitor numbers.

To remedy the negative effects to our community's image and reputation generated by Gold King Mine publicity, the County proposes to conduct an intensive public education campaign to inform community members and potential visitors about the extent to which Durango, La Plata County and the Animas River have recovered from the spill, that we are open for river-related recreation, and to promote the wonderful historic, cultural, and recreational opportunities as well as the natural wonders to be enjoyed in our area.

The target audience for this public education campaign includes many different types of river users as well as other groups whose activities are either directly or indirectly impacted by the health of the river. Popular river uses for both locals and visitors include swimming, rafting, kayaking and fishing. Ranchers and farmers also depend on the river to irrigate their crops and water their livestock. Durango has a thriving local restaurant scene that promotes locally grown, organic food - food grown with river water. Our six local breweries use treated river water to brew craft beer, and the world famous Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory uses treated river water to make its confections, which are then shipped all over the globe. Other uses that are strongly tied to the health of the river include hunting and outfitting, as wildlife drink the river water, and hiking, backpacking and camping, as people who use the backcountry often filter river water for drinking.

To implement its public education campaign, the County will retain a contractor to develop educational materials and messages, then disseminate those materials and messages not only locally, but across the nation, with a focus on Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and Southern California, the states in which the majority of visitors to Southwest Colorado live. We anticipate a three-year term for this portion of our work plan. Dissemination methods will include print (brochures, guides, newspapers and magazines), digital (web postings, email), direct mail, television, radio and social media. The contractor will also set up a web cams at a riverside locations, so that anyone worldwide who wants proof that the Animas River is returning to health can see that for themselves via a live video stream. By educating the public using these methods, the County hopes to reverse the damage done to our community's image and reputation by the EPA-created Gold King Mine spill. In turn, the EPA's image will be improved by the agency's funding of such education, and the agency can begin to regain the public trust it lost due to the spill.

Activities	Deliverables	Responsibility	Completed By
Contract with Consultant	Contractor Scope of Work	La Plata County	Month 2
Develop public education campaign strategic plan	Strategic Plan on file	Consultant	Month 3
Develop educational materials re: health of the Animas River and La Plata County communities	Information materials on file	Consultant	Ongoing/Years 1-3

Distribute educational materials re: health of Animas River and La Plata County communities via various media, both print and digital	Distribution methods documented and on file	Consultant	Ongoing/Years 1-3
Purchase and install webcam on Animas River, stream images to Internet	Link to live stream provided to EPA	Consultant	Purchase and install by Month 3; streaming ongoing

#### IV. **MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

La Plata County will manage funds and oversee work performed under this agreement using both existing staff and new hires. County Manager Joe Kerby will serve as project manager and will administer and implement the project with support from Assistant County Manager Joanne Spina, County and Finance Director Diane Sorensen. New hires will include a Project and Grant Administrator to coordinate work performed under the agreement and a part-time Grant Finance Specialist to help with fund management and financial reporting.

The role and experience of internal project staff is described below, and draft job descriptions for the new hires are attached.

##### **Joe Kerby, La Plata County Manager**

**Role: Recovery Manager** - Mr. Kerby will oversee implementation of this cooperative agreement and ensure that County staff timely complete all deliverables and reporting requirements.

**Experience:** Mr. Kerby has nearly 33 years of experience in local government and has been the La Plata County Manager since 2012. He has also served in the role of Deputy County Manager for Douglas County, Colorado; County Manager for Montrose County, Colorado; City Manager for the cities of Iola and Neodesha, Kansas and Delta, Colorado; and has served in executive management positions with the City of Colorado Springs. Mr. Kerby received a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of Colorado and a Master's Degree in Business with an emphasis in Computer Resource Management at Webster University. He is a certified public manager and is a current member of the Colorado City and County Managers Association, the National Association of County Administrators and the International City and County Managers Association.

##### **Joanne Spina, Assistant County Manager**

**Role: Assistant Recovery Manager**

**Experience:** Joanne M. Spina is the Assistant County Manager for La Plata County and has been employed by La Plata County for nearly 27 years. She graduated from Castle Junior College in Windham, NH with Associate Degree in Business and earned a certificate in Public Policy and Administration from the University of Colorado and certificate in mediation from the University of Texas, School of Law, Center for Public Policy Dispute Resolution. Ms. Spina is also a graduate of the Rocky Mountain Program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government. She is a former president and board member of the Association of Colorado County Administrators and is a current member of the Colorado City and County Managers Association, the National Association of County Administrators and the International City and County Managers Association.

Association. Her career in the public sector spans more than 35 years.

**Sheryl Rogers, County Attorney**

**Role: General Counsel** - Ms. Rogers and her staff at the County Attorney's Office will advise Project staff on their legal obligations under this cooperative agreement and ensure that the County remains in compliance with state and federal laws.

**Experience:** Ms. Rogers has been an attorney for 24 years and has represented La Plata County for 18 years, six of which have been as in-house counsel. In private practice Ms. Rogers was an associate or partner in both large and small firms. She graduated from the University of Denver College of Law in 1991 where she was a member of the Administrative Law Review. Her bachelor's degree is from the University of Kansas. Ms. Rogers was a member of the Colorado Bar Association Board of Governors from 2001-2006, President of the Southwest Colorado Bar Association (2006) and a Fellow of the Colorado Bar Association. She is admitted to practice law in Colorado, U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit and the United States Supreme Court.

**Diane Sorensen, County Finance Director**

**Role: Financial Reporting and Compliance** - Ms. Sorensen will be responsible for fiscal management of this grant, with the assistance of a part-time Grant Finance Specialist.

**Experience:** Finance Director for La Plata County since 2013, Ms. Sorensen is a CPA and a Certified Government Finance Manager (CGFM). She is a current member of American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). She currently serves on the Special Review Committee for the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Program (CAFR Program) award program. Ms. Sorensen has 10 years' experience as a Colorado County Finance Director. She has a Bachelor's degree in accounting with an emphasis in public accounting from Colorado Mesa University.

**New Hire, Project and Grant Administrator**

**Role:** The Project and Grant Administrator will manage the grant project, ensuring that Cooperative Agreement Work Plan activities are completed and that timely progress reports are submitted to the U.S. EPA.

**New Hire, Grant Finance Specialist**

**Role:** The Grant Finance Specialist will provide support to the Finance Department, helping to manage the funds awarded pursuant to this agreement and preparing quarterly and financial reports for submission to the EPA. The County has included in this agreement's budget funds to hire a half-time Finance Assistant or contract with a financial firm for fund management and reporting.

**V. BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION**